

THE GREEN CALDRON

A Magazine of Freshman Writing



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Farrelly and the School Board

P. J. FARRELLY

Rhetoric 101, Theme 12

PETE FARRELLY WAS LIKE ANY OTHER BOY LIVING IN a town of 5,000, except that he lacked two things, brains and muscles. One of Farrelly's big ambitions was to hold down a job all his own, one which paid big money. During the school year of 1944, Pete had heard that jobs were being offered to high school boys by the Webster Parish School Board. The jobs consisted of digging ditches, tarring roofs, moving houses, and building garages. The starting pay was forty cents an hour, and the work would carry him all over the Parish. Farrelly leaped at the chance; just think—earn money and travel too! Opportunity surely knocked for the small boy from Minden.

The notices came out in the papers that all who had applied for the job were to show up in the Parish office for the official seal of approval. This seal came in the form of Mr. J. J. Knight, a burly little man with a big cigar. Knight's approval came as a grunted, "Ugh." Farrelly got his "Ugh" and started to work.

On that very memorable June morning in the year 1944 the job, or maybe I had better say punishment, began. Pete was first assigned to join in with the rest of the crew and remove a monstrous sea of green, in the form of bullnettle, goldenrod, and grass, growing up the side of a hill.

Each man was handed his weapon, a hand scythe, and all advanced on the green wall. There had been no rain for weeks, and the grass was like corn stalks in October. After several blisters were raised on Farrelly's hand his mind began to work, "Why swing this scythe when one little match would do the trick, one piece of wood tipped with phosphorous? Such ingenuity might be the means of a raise." Producing said match, Farrelly dropped it in the nearest bleached thicket; the flames leaped and so did Mr. Knight. "You blundering imbecile, you moronic throwback from a caveman!" He screamed; he jumped; he chewed his cigar.

Farrelly looked all around; who could this madman be speaking to? Surely not Einstein Farrelly. But behold here he stood spitting like a panther and staring right into Pete's face. The man must be mad. After counting ten several times, saying his prayers, and biting his lower lip, Mr. J. J. Knight gained control of his voice. He creaked out a barely audible phrase which sounded something like, "Call the fire department, please." Farrelly then and only then noticed that his little brainstorm was raging all over the countryside, climbing the hill toward the school. Blankets were issued and the crew beat back the flames.

After the fire was under control, J. J. walked over to have a fatherly chat with our hero. The chat went something as follows:

"Where did you ever get that maniacal idea?"

"Maniacal? Why I thought you would hire me as an efficiency expert after such a brilliant show of brains."

"Farrelly, you're fired."

"What?"

"Never mind; you're too dumb to know what it means. Go help Emmett tar the roof of the shop."

"Yes, sir."

The tarring of the roof was something that remained on Farrelly's mind for weeks. Yes, it took a crew cut and a large cleaning bill to rid him of the tar.

Three days after the beginning of the job Knight got the word to start construction on a bus garage. The garage was a steel structure with a framework of pipe. The foundation was to be of cement and was to be sunk about four feet in red clay.

After digging with the rest of the crew on the foundation for several days, Pete was assigned to the making of cement forms. Of all the jobs on the school board the manufacturing of forms was the easiest; all it consisted of was nailing enough boards together to hold wet cement. Each man was told to make a certain number of forms, the only instructions being that the forms don't leak. Now our little genius, Pete, felt he at last had a chance to show his skill. With a hammer, some nails and a couple of feet of lumber he settled down to work; by quitting time he had made more forms than any other man on the job.

The next day one of Farrelly's forms was the first put into action; the first batch of cement was mixed and poured. The cement had hardly reached the bottom of the form before there was a loud squashing sound and cement began to pour out the side of the form; it seems Farrelly had forgotten to nail the middle of the form together, and as a result the cement squirted in a fine spray over everything in sight. What happened next is a question that will be disputed down through the years. Somehow Farrelly landed in the batch of wet cement he had been standing over. Now the author does not wish to make any accusations, but it does seem funny that the big chief, J. J., was standing behind Farrelly a few minutes before Farrelly landed face down in the soggy mass.

The garage was completed without any more mishaps because as Mr. Knight put it, "We had two men watching Farrelly at all times, ready to sound an alarm if he started anything deceptive." Rumors were that Farrelly was working for the Fifth Column, planning to drive Knight and the Superintendent of the School Board out of their minds. Mr. Knight instead took Farrelly as a challenge and determined to stick it out with him to the bitter end.

After the completing of the garage the crew went to the Springhill School to help Magooza, Matarats, Badush and Company move a house. The house was a large wooden structure that had to be sawed in half in order to be moved. Any normal wrecking and moving company would have power saws to do such a job, but not Mogooza, Matarats, Badush and Company; instead the crew formed a single line and each man was handed a hand saw.

Before the sawing began, Knight called all the boys together, told them he wanted the job done in two days, and walked through their ranks giving each a pat on the back and uttering those immortal words, "Don't forget to oil your saws."

The crew tackled the job with its usual vehemence, and Pete was given an inside job so his work wouldn't show. The first day of sawing went all right; everybody followed the prescribed line. Then Farrelly lost the two men assigned to watch him, and engaged in conversation with a friend. The boys were sawing on opposite sides of the room and in order to talk they naturally had to turn their heads. Don't let it be said that these boys were loafers, because all the time they were talking, they were sawing. By the time Farrelly's watchers found him again the two boys had the room sawed into a huge jig-saw puzzle. When Knight asked Farrelly the purpose of such a thing Farrelly retorted, "Why Mr. Knight, anybody can see that when the house is fitted together again this jig-saw puzzle arrangement will add to its strength." Knight got a wild look in his eyes, looked at Farrelly's throat, pulled his hat over his eyes, plunged his hands in his pockets, and staggered away.

The job was completed in two days, and except for the jig-saw room everything was in perfect order; the house was ready to move.

In order to move the house it had be jacked off its foundation, lowered onto dollies, and pulled by a winch to the desired spot. Knight was patting himself on the back the day the house was jacked up; nothing had gone wrong all day and Gremlin Farrelly seemed to be very satisfied with his job of handling the corner jack. It wasn't until after the boys had left for home that Knight, going around checking the jacks with a level, found that Farrelly's corner was about six inches higher than the others and that the house was slowly slipping off the jacks. Knight quickly lowered the jack and made a note to smash Farrelly with an eight by eight timber. The next day the crew rolled the dollies into position, removed the foundation, and lowered the house onto the dollies.

The dollies were to roll on an improvised boardwalk, since they would bog down on the soft ground. The moving company did not have enough timbers to reach the final position of the house; therefore the crew had to take the timbers the dollies had already rolled over and place them in front of the oncoming dollies, a hazardous job. Farrelly was assigned this job for one of the dollies; some say Mr. Knight had very sinister reasons for assigning him

such a job. The house was to be moved by means of two winches, one in front to pull it along, and one in the rear to keep the house from getting out of control.

The first section was moved into position without mishap; Knight noticed Farrelly was doing his work with the greatest of efficiency, a fact which brought a smug smile to the face of Mr. Knight.

The second section caused a bit more trouble; the house was rolling in perfect order until it reached a small downgrade; at this position the rear winch broke. The house started forward; and the man in the forward winch truck, upon seeing the house crashing down on him, gave his truck the gas, forgetting the cable between the truck and the house.

What a sight to behold: Mr. Knight racing and screaming like a man insane; the house traveling all over the countryside; the man in the truck changing every color in the spectrum, unable to figure out why the house was following him.

After the second winch snapped and the house bogged down, a still shaky J. J. Knight walked over to a small figure lying in the dust, tapped it on the shoulder, and asked in weak voice, "Farrelly, did you do this?"

Farrelly raised his head sheepishly from the dirt and replied, "No, sir."

"Well, why in heaven's name are you lying on the ground?" retorted Knight.

"I am trying to stop the flow of water from this pipe I forgot to disconnect from the house before we started moving," quavered Pete. Knight simply pivoted and left Farrelly clutching the pipe.

The house was assembled and nailed together; the only trouble encountered was in the nailing of the jig-saw room. In this room the boards that were placed over the rent seemed to go up the wall and across the ceiling in a sort of snakish pattern.

The day following the assembling and painting of the house, the crew started work on a ditch for the water line. Everything went smoothly, and after work the Chief called the boys together and told them to bring their birth certificates the next day. The School Board wanted the certificates for assurance of the age of the boys; insurance forms had to be filled out.

The next day Farrelly showed up bright and early with his birth certificate and was the first one to go in and see Knight. By this time Knight had developed a fear of the very presence of Farrelly, and when he entered Knight looked up and cringed. He filled in the insurance form and asked Farrelly for his birth certificate. Farrelly produced it and handed it to Knight. The expression which came upon J. J.'s face was the look of a man released from the pains of hell. "Farrelly," he sighed "you're too young to work here."

Farrelly's jaw dropped to his chest. "What will the school board do without me?" he croaked.

The summer Farrelly worked for the School Board is gone but not forgotten. To this day the jig-saw room and the pile of useless cement under the bus garage still remain as a memorial to the gremlin from Minden.

Malice in Wonderland

STANLEY ELKIN

Rhetoric 102, Theme 3

THERE IS A GAME THEY PLAY IN HOLLYWOOD. IN TWO dozen leather bound offices, two dozen leather bound movie people sit around long tables poised and ready. They are waiting a signal from their secretaries. At the appointed hour, each of these cinemaniacs will begin to work himself into a Hollywood frenzy (which is not to be confused with an Omaha frenzy or a Cedar Rapids frenzy) to see which of them can come up with a movie that is the exact prototype of the movie they made last week, or last month, or last year. There are rules in the game; the movie potentates must be very careful not to let the public suspect that this is where they came in. Triteness, ridiculous situations, juvenile appeal, and virgin stupidity are par for the course. To achieve a note of ultra-realism, they often send out for the studio-guides to write the script.

Upon occasion, a producer or director will forget where he is and he will make a picture like *The Lost Weekend* or *The Snake Pit*. If he ever repeats his carelessness and creates something worthwhile, he is given an "Oscar," and then nobody will ever speak to him again.

The above might seem to be a travesty on the motion picture industry, but I seriously believe that something close to the things I have described actually happens in Celluloid City. Elsewise, why should the motion pictures remain on such a consistently low level? Is the American public so stultified that it cannot recognize first-rate entertainment? Or is it resigned to the fact that there "ain't no such animal" as a good motion picture? If it is the latter, why should it be? The American public demands, and gets, the best automobiles, the best radios, the best fountain pens, and the best pop-up toasters. In fact, there is a superlative before the name of almost every American product. Why should we lag behind the rest of the world in our films?

I think that there are several factors that determine the paucity of quality in our movies. One of the most important of these factors, I believe, is based upon the reports the studios receive from some of their exhibitors. These reports remain constant in that they are always from the same people and that they always claim movies which are designed to appeal to a more intelli-

gent audience do not have much of a tendency to make money. The "noble experiments" of the movies are box-office mis-fits, and Hollywood is just a little bit cautious of duplicating pictures that will not "pull." If it is ever to attain excellence in its productions, Hollywood will have to pay less attention to statistics and give more attention to intelligent criticisms of their films. They will probably find that they can make just as much money with a good picture as they can with a bad picture.

Wonderland must do something about its own unadulterated poor taste if it is ever to make pictures for people of an adult mental age. It concentrates on magnificent backgrounds for its pictures and completely ignores what the protagonists are saying. Many movies impress me as though the actors and actresses were making the whole thing up as they went along. Hollywood will spend one million dollars to construct an exact duplicate of the Taj Mahal so that Tyrone Power can say, "I'm warm for you, baby," to some sexy Indian princess. When they concentrate on dialogue with the same diligence they expend in reproducing the minor details of an eighteenth-century drawing room, we will have good pictures.

If we are to list filmdom's major faults, we must mention this iniquity. Some things you must never say to a movie producer are: Insanity, Sex, Mercy-killings, Jews, Irish Catholics, Adultery, Alcoholism, Negroes, and Bastards. Those are only a few; the list of controversial themes which are verboten in the land of Technicolor and the double feature is as long as the list of Hopalong Cassidy pictures. For every *Lost Weekend* and *Gentlemen's Agreement*, there are hundreds of *Blondie Goes Home to Mother*. For every character delineation that is to any degree worthwhile, there are hundreds of *Portraits of Lassie*. Hollywood has to learn to stand up and fight and not hide in the corner every time the Legion of Decency puts on a long face.

Hesitancy to make good pictures for fear that they will not pull at the box-offices, extravagance of production, negligence in script, and the phobia against anything controversial are the three cardinal sins that hold Hollywood back and keep good movies from our screens.

Until they learn to straighten out these difficulties, the picture boys of California are going to go on producing "B" (for bad) pictures. But no matter what they do, I'll keep on going to the movies. I'm just like everyone else. I like popcorn!

Behind This Door

My room is not just an enclosed space at the corner of the house, holding a bed, a desk, and other commonplace furniture, but a haven where dreams are begun—or carried through—a sanctuary where prayers are not scoffed at and bubbles are not pricked, where undignified sprawls are not frowned upon, where I can be alone. It is the only place in which I am the real *me*.—WILMA JOHNSTON.

The Volcano Krakatoa

EARLE W. DENEAU

Rhetoric 102, Theme 12

AS A RESULT OF KRAKATOA'S ERUPTION IN 1883, THIS Javanese volcano became world famous. During the closing days of August, the telegraph cable from Batavia to Singapore, and thence to every part of the civilized world, carried news of a terrible subterranean disturbance—one which in its destructive results to life and property and in the world-wide effects to which it gave rise is perhaps without equal in recorded history.¹

The scene of this terrible catastrophe lies in the very heart of the region long recognized as the center of the world's greatest volcanic activity. The Island of Java contains 49 great volcanos, the highest approaching a height of 12,000 feet above sea level. More than half of these volcanos have been seen in eruption, and others are in a state of constant, lesser activity. Some of these volcanos form an east-west chain that extends into Sumatra in the west and Bali in the east. This chain is traversed at right angles in the Sunda Strait by another chain of volcanos in a north-south direction extending from the south of Java north into Sumatra. This linear arrangement of these two chains of volcano ranges indicates the existence of great fissures in the earth's rocky crust through which subterranean forces have been able to erupt and spend their energy. At the point of intersection of these fissures in the shallow Sunda Strait between Sumatra and Java lies the Krakatoa group of small volcanic islands.²

These little islands are but fragments of a crater-ring of an earlier volcano of considerable dimensions. At some unknown period this volcano erupted, blowing away its whole central mass and leaving a huge crater, the basal wreck rising but a few hundred feet above sea level. Smaller, quieter eruptions gradually filled up the crater, and portions of these active lateral cones built up the islands that now exist.³ Several large eruptions in early centuries on Krakatoa have been attested to by native folklore, the latest occurring in 1680. Only the most meager account of this eruption has been found, so very little is known of recent activity until the nineteenth century.⁴

One would suppose that men situated at this critical point would show great interest in Krakatoa. However, this was not the case. None of the

¹ G. J. Symons, ed., *The Eruption of Krakatoa and Subsequent Phenomena* (London, 1888), p. 1.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

³ "Krakatoa," *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1947 edition), XIII, 498-499.

⁴ Symons, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

islands were ever permanently inhabited; the natives only frequented them to collect produce or provide anchorages for their fishing boats. Thousands of ships passed within a few miles of them, for they were located astride one of the main shipping lanes between the China Seas and the Indian Ocean, and yet very little of their interior character was known.

Neither Dutch nor English navigation charts gave exact details of the forms or contours of the islands even though the two channels north and south of the group were carefully sounded. Not even a topographical or geological survey had been made, and because of this lack of information the exact nature and changes wrought by the 1881 eruption will never be known. In fact the only description of the Krakatoa Islands before the eruption said only they were of volcanic nature and were covered with a beautiful, luxuriant tropical vegetation.⁵

Six or seven years before this volcano brought forth nature's might and destruction, it became evident that dormant forces beneath the Sunda Strait were becoming active. Earthquakes that were felt as far away as Australia were of frequent occurrence.⁶ In May of 1883 volcanic noises were heard at Batavia, a hundred miles from Krakatoa. Two days after the noises were heard, a steam column issuing from Krakatoa revealed the point of the disturbance. One ship estimated the height of this column to be seven miles. Krakatoa had entered a phase of moderate activity. Five days later a small party proceeded from Batavia to make an investigation. From a distance the whole island was seen to be covered with pumice, and only tree trunks protruded from its mantle to mark where dense forests once stood. On the island they found a 3,000-foot wide crater with a center cavity 150 feet in diameter emitting a huge cloud of steam.⁷

After this brief visit, there was no intermission in the eruption, although the activity seemed to decline. Again in July, sea captains described another violent spasm and two steam columns were reported as being seen.⁸

On August the 26th Krakatoa passed into the Vesuvian stage, and the detonations caused by the explosive action reached such a volume that at 1:00 p.m. they were heard in Batavia. By 5:00 p.m. they were heard all over the island of Java. A vast column of steam, smoke, and ashes was computed to be seventeen miles high by a nearby ship. At 7:00 p.m. the mighty column attained the form of a pine tree and became illuminated by electric flashes. The generation of atmospheric electricity became so great that lightning struck several ships, while others became covered with phosphorescent St. Elmo's fire of static electricity. All that night no one within two hundred miles was able to sleep because of the roaring, thunder-like noises.⁹

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁶ "Krakatoa," p. 499.

⁷ Sir Robert S. Ball, *In Starry Realms* (London, 1892), p. 322.

⁸ *The Eruption of Krakatoa and Subsequent Phenomena*, pp. 12-14.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

On August 27th four great explosions occurred at 5:30, 6:44, 10:20, and 10:52 in the morning, the greatest being at 10:20. Dust and pumice had been falling for several days but at 11:20 a.m. the entire sky for a hundred and fifty miles from the volcano had become so black with the thick volcanic cloud that complete darkness fell. It was like the darkest of nights. From this cloud of dust, pumice, and steam, dust balls rained for several hours. At 3:00 p.m. the cloud had dissipated.¹⁰

During this imposed darkness great sea waves were propagated by the explosions, which produced extraordinary inundations. These seismic waves attained a height of seventy-two feet over a hundred miles from their source. One warship, the *Berow*, was swept inland a mile and three-quarters and deposited thirty feet above sea level. The inrush of these enormous masses of water caused a loss of 36,380 lives, devastated every town and village along the Sunda coastline, stranded all vessels near shore, and swept away two light houses. These waves were composed of two types: long waves at periods of over an hour, and shorter but higher waves at irregular and briefer intervals. The greatest waves were combinations of both of these and had an average height of fifty feet. The westerly-traveling long waves reached as far as the English Channel, while the shorter waves reached the shores of Ceylon. Those moving in other directions were quickly absorbed by the shore lines of the many islands in their way and did not travel far.¹¹

These great explosions also produced three kinds of air waves. Those waves of sufficiently fast vibration caused sound waves and noises bordering on the incredible. The sound from Krakatoa was audible for a distance of 3,000 miles. Imagine, if you will, that these sounds were heard with great distinctness in the Philippine Islands, West and South Australia, Rodriguez, Ceylon, and French Indo-Chino. They ranged in pitch and intensity from sounds like the distant roar of heavy guns at these extreme distances to deafening primary concussions in Batavia.

Other waves of larger dimensions producing shock traveled to Batavia, throwing down lamps, extinguishing gas jets, breaking windows, and even cracking walls. All accounts attribute these results to air waves and not earthquakes.¹²

The larger air waves from the 10:20 explosion gave an atmospheric disturbance that affected every particle of atmosphere on our globe. These inaudible undulations at once initiated circular waves that sped away from the center of disturbance like waves caused by dropping a pebble into a pond. These waves increased in diameter until they had reached the end of their hemisphere, whereupon they contracted in the opposite hemisphere, converging

¹⁰ Ball, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

¹¹ "Krakatoa," p. 499.

¹² Ball, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-334.

on the anti-pole. From the anti-pole in South America they re-radiated back to their original pole. This phenomenon of vibration back and forth continued for six times until friction restored stability to the upper air masses. Barometers all over the world were able to detect them. Never before had man made measurements of any scientific value on such a large scale as the barometric computations of these Krakatoa air-waves.¹³

This tremendous eruption blew millions of tons of fine volcanic dust and ash into the upper atmospheric regions. Here the high velocity winds and currents swept these tiny particles in an easterly direction for a series of voyages around the world. At first the dust formed a girdle around the tropical regions in thirteen days, then gradually dispersed into a wider belt until it embraced Europe, the lower portions of North America and Asia, and all of Africa, Australia, and South America except its extreme southern tip. The optical phenomena created as a result of this dust gave most of the people of the earth the chance to witness some exceptionally beautiful, exquisite twilights and after-glows for one whole winter.¹⁴ Even the sun and moon were observed at some places as blue, green, or silvery.

Two things strangely did not occur as a result of the eruption. Usually after volcanic activity there is noticed world wide magnetic disturbance. None occurred in this case. Also no violent earthquakes followed in its wake. Only one very slight tremor was felt on a nearby island. These facts when combined with the others lead to the conclusion that the eruption of Krakatoa was geologically unusual.¹⁵

After these mighty convulsions had diminished and then ceased, Mr. Verbeck, an imminent Dutch geologist, investigated the remaining cone of Krakatoa. In his report he states that on the 26th Krakatoa had erupted and produced a huge crater which was immediately filled by inrushing sea water. This formed a massive lid of cooled lava on top of the subterranean forces, thus checking their action. But the volatile substances built up a pressure so great that on the 27th Krakatoa, to relieve this tension, expended itself on a grander scale than before and blew away this lid and two-thirds of its entire surface (about one cubic mile in volume), which fell to the north into the sea, producing the great sea waves and other phenomena. The northern channel was completely blocked by banks of volcanic material, which was soon washed away by wave action and scattered on the sea floor. All around Krakatoa for twelve miles the crater was raised by sixty feet.¹⁶

Numerous botanists and biologists of the period undertook to study how nature would restore flora and fauna to this now sterile land. None of them

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 326-331.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 335-342.

¹⁵ *The Eruption of Krakatoa and Subsequent Phenomena*, pp. 465-471.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 42-46.

made what may be termed by modern standards a complete investigation covering the entire island for any long period of time. All they accomplished were very infrequent and short visits, and thus at the most crucial time of the experiment huge time-gaps exist in which nothing is known about the reclamation. Later scientists believe that these facts invalidate earlier findings, while other scientists have gone to great extremes to prove the findings correct. Regardless of what their opinions may be, nature has reclaimed the island, and it now appears to have wholly recovered.¹⁷

Several times recently a small cone has pushed its way to the surface of the sea in the middle of the great crater. Many scientists are closely watching it from a nearby island and are finding on it many answers to questions about reclamation by nature that they did not find on Krakatoa. Verbeck predicted this cone, and that perhaps, in our generation, Krakatoa will again erupt.¹⁸

¹⁷ C. A. Backer, *The Problems of Krakatoa as Seen by a Botanist*, Sourabaya, 1929, pp. 1-4.

¹⁸ W. M. Docters van Leeuwen, *Krakatoa* (Leiden, 1936), pp. 267-271.

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Something Good for a Change

MELVIN CHUROVICH

Rhetoric 102, Theme 8

THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION HAS failed to accomplish any one of its three major purposes. It has failed to conserve the wildlife and the natural resources that are related to wildlife. It has failed to improve the soil erosion situation. It has failed to reduce the pollution of Illinois lakes and streams. Such complete failure by an agency that spends over three million dollars of public funds each year demands investigation. What caused this failure? What can be done to insure future success in conservation efforts?

The cause lies in the organization of the department. As it is now organized, the conservation department is unsuited for handling the complex

problems of conservation. The state legislature and the state senate, the policy-making bodies for the department, hold only one six-month meeting in two years and have to devote most of that time to thousands of other items of state government. Even a group of trained, experienced conservationists could not hope to meet the rapid changes in conservation conditions if they were confined to a similar schedule. The director of the department and the employees of the department are chosen on a basis of political affiliations rather than one of training and experience. As a result, they are subject to political pressure and are likely to lose their positions any time the political complexion of the state changes. This change can occur overnight every two years. The recent state election demonstrated this possibility. The change in personnel invariably results in the dropping or the complete reversing of the programs and policies that had been started by the out-going group. So far, no program has been carried out long enough to prove its effectiveness.

A cure for this undesirable situation has been proposed in the form of a commission type of conservation department. Under this system, the policy-making body would be a six or eight man administrative board. The members of this board would be chosen for their ability and interest in conservation and would meet at least once each month to consider the problems of conservation. Not more than half of these members would be allied with any one political party. This board would select the director and the employees of the department from applicants on a basis of competitive civil service examinations. With these conditions in effect, a continuing program of research and development could be carried on. This program would change only with the discovery of better methods of procedure; changes in political control of the state would have no effect on it. The progress of conservation under the commission plan can be seen readily in the case of Wisconsin, the twenty-sixth state to adopt this system. Although its wildlife potential is lower than that of Illinois, Wisconsin surpasses Illinois in the actual abundance of most forms of wildlife. Although its hilly surface is cut by many fast streams, Wisconsin has much less soil erosion than Illinois and has practically no pollution of its lakes and streams.

The Illinois Department of Conservation has failed, and promises to do nothing but fail as it is now organized. Therefore, it is time for a change—a change to a proved system of conservation government. The commission plan offers such a change.

Frustration

I pulled myself up to my full six feet and some odd inches and, in my most authoritative manner, ordered Cheryl to eat her food. The forcefulness of my command startled her, and she looked to me for permission to resume her playing. Again, with my face hard and firm, I said, "No" She watched me out of the corner of her eye as she proceeded to turn her plate over.—What can you do with them?—DEANE BAKER.

The Russian Veto

JOHN SHUGART

Rhetoric 102, Theme 9

WITH GROWING VEXATION, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED States have watched the United Nations linger between a balk and a breakdown. The obvious villain in the U. N. drama is the Russian veto. Consequently many proposals have been made to eliminate the veto in questions dealing with aggression. Should the Russians refuse to accept such a diminution of power, the other nations of the world probably would set up a revised U. N. without them. However I believe that such a revision would result only in the complete disintegration of the U. N.; therefore I contend that the major powers' veto should not be eliminated.

The problem at hand is not one of form but of substance. The significance of the veto is probably the real point of contention, for it does not represent the personal reaction of a hot-headed Gromyko and his aides but rather is an expression of a larger obstacle to world peace—Russian intransigence. If the veto is banished from the U. N., this intransigence would still exist in the world as Russian armed force or active aggression. I will agree with those who contend that Russia is not equipped to wage war on the United States. However, with the elimination of the veto I can see no security for smaller nations, some of which have already been overrun by Communist led coups d'état! Thus far Russia, perhaps restrained by the existence of the U. N., has waged war only cautiously—war under an assumed name.

The elimination of the veto could only mean the disintegration of the U. N. The Soviet bloc, the Arab states, perhaps the Far Eastern bloc would walk out, leaving the world divided into three or four armed camps. Many friendly nations with whom the United States has a strong working alliance in the U. N. would jump for a neutral corner. Consider a similar disintegration of the neighborhood gang. The younger boys perceive that the separation of the gang into two groups under different leaders is certainly not a movement toward peaceful relations. In all probability the younger boys will stay within easy reach of Mother's doorstep if the leader of their choosing offers them no security against the rival gang. Should the U. N. collapse, so would the only possible bridge between the East and West; yet the problem of bringing the gap between the East and West is precisely the crucial problem of our time.

Thus far Russia's uncompromising attitude has been based on the hope that Capitalism needed just one more shove before it collapsed. The United States intends to prove that Capitalism will not collapse. If the Russians are forced

to realize that Communism has to live with Capitalism, I believe they will ultimately cooperate. Until this Russian cooperation is obtained, forced changes in the mere forms of international coöperation, such as the elimination of the veto, will not only be wasted but also dangerous effort.

A Fair Look at Life

KENNETH ANDERSON

Rhetoric 101, Theme 7

WE HAD SEEN JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING THERE WAS to see at the little country fair. We had reviewed the prize livestock and judged them carefully in the manner of old dairy men, using barely intelligible monosyllables muffled by our intense chewing of long blades of grass and punctuated by short, careful jabs in bovine midsections. We had ridden on the fair's only ride, ineptly named the "Red Comet," which, we complained bitterly to all who would listen, afforded about as many thrills as a game of bean-bag. We had visited the midway, where we had jeeringly discredited the magician's most laudable tricks by shouting that he was using mirrors. We had thrown discarded cigarette butts in the wild Man of Borneo's cage, and we had been rewarded by a string of wild, but nevertheless good American, invectives. Our conduct was not winning us many friends in that area, so we migrated to the shady side of the fair. (I use that word "shady" in a colloquial sense, for it was already late evening.)

The aspect that was shady about this part of the fair was the existence of two troupes of dancing girls who had somewhat dubious reputations. My friend and I had never witnessed anything like these girl shows, and so, being young and of an inquisitive nature we moved up to where we could listen to the barkers extol the virtues (or vices?) of their respective shows.

We stood enthralled by two girls in spangled blue costumes who were swaying sinuously to a backwood's version of the Hawaiian War Chant. This was played on a cracked, tired-looking banjo that had obviously seen better days. Unnoticed by the two of us, the crowd's steady pressure had pushed us up to the entrance of the tent, but we were stunned into reality by the barker's hoarse baying, seemingly right in our ears. "Step right up and git yer tickets, folks," he bellowed, "And if yer not satisfied yuh can git yer money back." As an afterthought he added, "This here show is fer adults only." Then he turned confidently, shot a piercing glance at me and growled, "How many tickets, son?" I stood stupefied, but my friend, being unusually bright

for his thirteen years, promptly thrust two quarters in the man's hand, and we found ourselves pushed inside this heretofore unattainable, maddeningly mysterious tent.

We looked furtively around us, hoping perhaps to see some others we knew who could share in our wickedness. The barker, who by this time had stopped selling tickets, came in and introduced the first girl. "Step closer, folks," he said, "She won't bite you," and then he gave the crowd a long, horrifying, licentious wink. "Why," he said, "This little lady here has danced in all the best places and before the best people in these United States!" This I strongly doubted, but before I could relay my convictions to my friend, the girl began to dance. I just had time to close one eye before she smoothly discarded an important piece of her costume. The crowd gave a lusty roar; I closed the other eye and gripped my buddy's arm. He shook me off and pushed closer to the rope that separated the audience from the performers.

"Well," I thought sadly, "he certainly is going to the dogs." I moved closer and peered warily at the girl in blue. I recoiled in horror. "Why," I whispered hoarsely, "she doesn't have any—."

"Shut up, will you, kid!" muttered a large, sunburned farmer who was apparently enjoying himself.

The girl retired to her dressing room amid the plaudits of the crowd.

The barker stepped out in front of us. "You folks," he remarked with a leer, "haven't seen anything yet!" I was not in a debating mood, or else I might have contested the point with him. The show's one other artist stepped out in front of us. "This be-u-tiful, tan-talizing little girl," the barker went on volubly, "this little girl will not only dance for you; she is gonna dance *with* you!" He leered again. "Are there any volunteers?" he said, and seemed to look right at the place where I was standing.

Thoroughly terrified, I shrank behind a brawny shoulder and quickly aged ten more years. Someone sprang on the stage and began acquiring pieces of the girl's costume, ostensibly for souvenirs. The crowd whooped enthusiastically, and the girl carefully smashed the offending gentleman on the nose with her fist. A more conservative patron took his place, and the couple began a horrendous dance. I pulled at my friend's sleeve, possibly a little less eagerly and secretly secure in the knowledge that nothing short of disaster would move him. I whispered in an awed tone, "Isn't this terrible!" He mumbled something, but his gaze never wavered.

The act concluded amid thunderous clapping and many shouted remarks which were beyond our intelligence. The still-leering barker ushered us out of the tent and urged our speedy return.

As we walked back up the midway, my friend remarked with an astonishing lack of imagination, "Gee, that girl could sure dance!"

"Couldn't she though?" I answered, and we each picked up a blade of grass and chewed it with a worldly arrogance.

"University Life Is Essentially an Exercise in Thinking"

IVO HERZER

Rhetoric 102, Final Examination

I BELIEVE WE ALL AGREE THAT THINKING MEANS MORE than memorizing. Thinking is an active process in which facts stored by the memory should only play the part of the ignition spark.

It seems that mass education tends to produce men and women who know where to find facts and how to use them provided they still remember the standard procedures contained in those twenty-odd textbooks that every college student is required to know "cold." At its best, such a system will produce engineers who will know the details of their highly specialized profession; it will never produce an Einstein or a Madame Curie. If we turn to subjects like economics, psychology, and political science, we realize that they cannot yet present absolute truths. No one textbook may claim that what it presents is sufficient—for an academic education at least. What a pitiful sight it is to see those hundreds of students who religiously burden their memory with definitions which they are supposed to regard as absolute truth! How little originality in their studies do they have when all their knowledge serves only to enable them to fill in blanks and check the "true or false" statements! And even the engineering or physics student, instead of being taught how to derive formulas, which are but mathematical expressions of physical principles and thinking, must know a certain number of formulas by heart and has not even the time to derive them on an examination. Mass education puts so much stress on *time* and on memorizing that it kills thinking. What is the use of having wonderful libraries when the student is required to spend almost all of his free time in doing textbook homework? Besides, a student may have read and understood all the books on, say, economics, but if he does not fill the test blanks as he is expected to, he will probably fail to pass the course. So why read books other than textbooks?

It seems to me that the basic philosophy of American mass education originated in the minds of a soap manufacturer, a time-keeper, and a statistician. American colleges are run like factories and are producing, like factories, thousands of graduates resembling each other in knowledge as much as is humanly possible.

Those who believe in America's mass education principles invariably boast of what American science and technology have achieved. True, but who are

the leaders, the *top* scientists, economists, psychologists? Did they receive their education at the University of Iowa (or Illinois) at the University of Berlin or Oxford or Vienna?

I know that in my criticism of the American educational system I am not a lonely voice. Thousands of American students feel the same as I do, but they lack the initiative to challenge the present state of education. Some day, perhaps, those who wish to think while getting an education will win. That day, however, remains at a great distance from the present.

Education, The United States vs. Europe

ROBERT HUNDT

Rhetoric 100, Theme 8

I DISAGREE ENTIRELY WITH MISS SHATTUCK'S ESSAY, "What's Wrong with the American High School?" which appears in the *Student Prose Models*. Miss Shattuck not only attacked the American high school system, but she threw gross insults at many phases of the entire educational system in the United States. Regardless of her study of European high school systems, how she could arrive at such ridiculous conclusions, and how she could bring herself to the point of supporting such a position, is utterly beyond comprehension. Evidently she fell easy prey to European glitter, and in fact, she probably fell in love with the European system of education. While expounding the theoretical fine points of the European educational system, she became so engrossed in them that she lost sight of the supreme purpose of education, which is manifested by the product of education itself and not by the process by which this product is secured.

I am sorry that Miss Shattuck failed to get much out of her high school years. I did not fail to secure something from mine. I am also sorry to hear that our great scientists cannot spell, and that the rest of our population can neither speak nor write well. Perhaps we should have thrown some of our great scientists out of college because they couldn't spell Napoleon on their history quizzes. Or perhaps France has lost some great scientists because they used a dangling modifier in explaining the complex and technical method of producing explosives. Then there is the fact that the American student's mind has accumulated a little about a lot of things, and that he forgets most of what he has learned. There is, of course, doubt, confusion, and an inability

to meet situations effectively. This is compared with the shrewd, calculating, and knowing mind of the European student—so says Miss Shattuck.

Again, I say that Miss Shattuck has lost sight of the fact that the product, not the process, of education is the most important thing to be considered in evaluating the educational progress and development of any one country.

The American mind, through its education, has been allowed to remain a free mind, and it has developed a vibrant, versatile character. It is alive with innovation, with wit, with artistic passion; a mind alert, glowing with hope and true pride—a free mind which has developed a great free nation. The continental mind, as it has always been, is a mind of directed thinking, of racial prejudices and pride, of a superior air, of stuffy dignity, and of pseudo-philosophy. It is a traditional, rigid, conservative, static type of mind, peculiar to almost all Europeans, whether learned or otherwise. The very fact that the basis of American education is freedom of thought should make Miss Shattuck know better. The free thought that the American system of education offers is many times better than the politically tainted, carefully guided educational systems of Europe.

Miss Shattuck, the success of a country's educational system can only be measured by the progress it makes in molding that country into a great democratic state. You can go to France to see what her superior education has netted her. You may have French and German chaos. You may have their inefficiency and their inability to cope with situations that face them. You can see seventy-five years of decline, before your eyes, in France—under her superior education, of course. You can trace the German mind, a truly liberal mind, Miss Shattuck, through war, to greed, to hate, and finally to destruction. Germany had a planned curriculum, Miss Shattuck, a liberal tone, and a superior status. The European educational system is superior, is it not, Miss Shattuck?

In conclusion, let me apologize for our pitiful educational system. I am sorry American education cannot breed confusion and hate. I am sorry it cannot give us a society comparable to that of France and Germany. I am glad, however, that our high school and college systems have made us the freest, the most liberal, the most tolerant, the kindest, and the most prosperous society the world has ever known.

If, however, we are to measure our standards by the criterion you have set, Miss Shattuck, then I must apologize for what our educational system has done.

Observation

The hamburger joint proprietor is the average man's bartender, the auditor and confessor for the people who come in to drown their sorrows in mustard or to find surcease in the intoxicating aroma of hot buns, sizzling meat, aging grease, catsup and coffee.—JOHN ERICKSON.

Vacation

ANONYMOUS

Rhetoric 101, Theme 12

DRESSED IN ONE OF MY NICE COTTON DRESSES, I WAS IN the backyard awaiting the time of my departure. My "bosom" pal, Norma, was with me, and we engaged in a last minute game of "Buck Rogers," a game that had to be played in the backyard so that we could use the grape arbor for our rocket ship. We were both somewhat aware of the significance of the event which was about to take place; we had subdued our roars according to our childish sense of propriety.

This was the day in early summer when I was to leave for my vacation at my father's home. My journey had always been referred to as a "vacation" when mentioned to me, but I sensed that this trip was to mean much more than that to everyone in my family. I had caught snatches of talk wafted up the stairs from the living room late at night, when I was supposed to be asleep. From the conversation between my grandparents and my mother, I realized dimly that they were not viewing my vacation with the enthusiasm that they professed to me. It is true that I had some regrets upon leaving—some of them for the coming absence from my mother and the rest of the immediate family, and some of them for the loss of my friends' companionship. But with the cold-heartedness that accompanies youth and is often the result of ignorance of impending unhappiness, I was willing to leave my grandparents' stucco home on Maplewood Avenue with a minimum of regret. This was to be an adventure!

I was aware from what was said by people around me that life had recently taken an unusual turn for me. My mother and father did not live together as did the parents of all my friends, and I still had a vivid memory of a scene in what had been referred to as a "courtroom." I had been placed on a high bench. Mother and Daddy had been there too, both looking very serious and anxious, and I realized vaguely that the incident had something to do with my approaching vacation. However, beyond that memory I had no recollection of a time when things had been different.

My father was a not too familiar figure in my life, as it seemed that most of my acquaintance with him had been on Sundays when he picked me up in his car. He would take me to visit many places; some of them were exciting enough so that I forgot myself in delight, like the time we visited the zoo. Other times, however, I felt strange and out-of-place and would await the return home eagerly. Most of my strangeness I attributed to a longing for the fun which could be had in my normal surroundings, but part of the emptiness was due to an innate desire to return to my home and family.

As the minutes flew by, a growing realization of the importance of my coming journey dawned upon me, and the game of "Buck Rogers" began to lose its glamour for both Norma and me. Bits of conversation which had been overheard began to recall themselves to my mind.

"Two months is an awfully long time. . . . Can't help but worry about her. . . . I am afraid she will be very lonely. . . . There is no place for her to play. . . . What if she becomes ill? . . . Can't we prevent John from keeping her so long? . . . Two months is a terribly long time." Darts of uneasiness began to enter my mind.

"Why must I go away for all this time? Are there other children to play with at Daddy's? Can Norma come and visit me?" My thoughts were interrupted by my grandmother's call.

"Patsy, you had better come in now. It's time for you to leave."

Norma and I entered the house to find a young woman waiting for me. She was my father's maid and had come to conduct my journey, for my father was unable to call for me. The excitement of the event erased from my mind the doubts of a few moments before. I was arrayed in my best clothes, the only sour note being, in my opinion, those hateful black patent leather and white buckskin high-top shoes. The maid grasped my small suitcase, and after kissing each member of the family a blithe farewell, I set off down familiar Maplewood Avenue.

I was disappointed to find that our trip was to be made by anything as ordinary as a streetcar, but the fresh scenes presented to my eyes as the streetcar ground and clanked its way through streets that were new to me occupied my attention for a while. Occasionally I cast sidelong glances at the girl whom I was accompanying. She caught my look several times and returned it with a faint but warm smile. Soon I began to inquire, "When do we get off?" I was answered by the usual but none too encouraging word "soon." My stomach was beginning to feel funny, and I knew that I was going to be sick before long. In a few minutes, however, she arose and told me that it was time to get off.

As we approached my father's home, I recognized it as the apartment building that I had visited several times before. I was truthfully disappointed, for the word "vacation" had brought to my mind visions of an excitingly new and different place. We mounted the elevator to the apartment and were greeted at the door by my father's wife, Frances. She was a lively, kind woman who treated me very nicely whenever I saw her. My things were quickly unpacked and put in order, and then I began to explore my surroundings with a careful inquisitiveness.

My first few days were spent quietly but interestingly. I liked to look down at the street from the window of the apartment. The people I could see fascinated me; the excitement and life were new to me who was used to quiet and shady Maplewood Avenue. This diversion began to lose its flavor, how-

ever, for the actions of the specks that were people became a continuous pattern not to be broken by any event of interest to one of my age. It was then that I first felt the complete change to my present situation from that of a few days before. I began to look about for something to do, or for someone to play with me.

My father and Frances must have sensed my uneasiness, for one evening my father came home with a gift for me. It was a small doll with a little suitcase full of tiny, stylish clothes. My delight was complete, and with abandon I became engrossed in the make-believe life of my toy companion. The presence of this doll entity soon brought about a new longing, however. Playing with the doll when the bright sunshine penetrated into the apartment, I began to wish for my Grandmother's large backyard where Norma and I would spread out blankets and spend long hours engrossed in the exciting world of dolls. The doll too lost its fascination for me, and I asked whether there were any other girl or boy to play with. There was not. Then I began to inquire whether Norma could come to visit me.

By this time I had almost completely decided that I did not like my "vacation." It wasn't much fun. Each day was becoming endless. I felt closed in by the apartment and hated not being able to slip out the kitchen door and into a spacious yard filled with trees and just the right amount of shade and sunlight for all purposes. I was realizing just how long two months might be, and with this realization each day became dimmer and longer. The summer was becoming warm and sticky—I wanted to be able to run under the hose in the late afternoon as I had done at my Grandmother's. Even going out to the busy street below the apartment building was not much fun. I preferred hot sun and quiet Western Avenue, where the routine was broken only by an occasional passing streetcar and slow-moving autos. There I could enter the bakery and be greeted by Mrs. Spiegel, who would give me a cookie before I left. At the stores where I now visited, the people had tired, implacable faces and seemed scarcely to see such a small child as I.

An insignificant incident of an afternoon finally resulted in my complete sense of disappointment and loneliness. It was a stifling hot summer day when Frances suggested that the maid take me across the street for an ice cream cone. With my usual anticipation of such a delicacy, I was eager to go. We crossed the thoroughfare teeming with automobiles and pedestrians and made our purchase. I was content with my double-dip chocolate icecream cone. But I had not had a chance to taste even one delicious lick of it when a catastrophe occurred. The maid (whose name forever escapes me) and I saw that the light was in our favor and dashed across the street without a minute to spare. We barely reached the other curb when the cars started up with a roar. I looked down at the cone which I had held clutched tightly in my hand during our hurried crossing and discovered to my utter despair that the icecream was gone and only the cone remained. Sudden hot tears

rose to my eyes. This was a horrible event which reached into my childish sensitivity although many of the bigger and more important happenings of the recent weeks had failed to impress me.

The maid, of course, set about to rectify the loss as quickly as possible by purchasing more icecream to fill the empty cone. My tears vanished, but the hot, dry feeling in my throat remained—my heart began to skip a beat and come in hard, static thumps from time to time. I knew that I was going to be sick.

For as long as I could remember I had been plagued with a stomach which was easily upset. Oh, I never got ill by eating the wrong foods; my stomach seemed to be able to take any amount of gorging and always has. But if for some reason I became extremely excited, either by happiness or unhappiness, I became what appeared to be deathly sick. The cure was simple enough if the cause was slight; all I had to do was lie down for a time. However, while I was ill, I became extremely pale and dizzy, and my heart pounded furiously.

My sense of loss resulting from the mishap on the street had brought the unpleasantness of my entire situation to me with a rush. I had felt strange and unfamiliar while standing on the corner in the midst of the traffic. Now I realized that I felt strange and unfamiliar in all of my new surroundings. All the disappointments of my "vacation" were thrust in front of my eyes, and any happiness was washed away by the rising tide of homesickness.

Shortly after returning to the apartment, my heart began to pound violently, and I was ill. Frances became alarmed, especially since my father was not expected home until later that evening. I lay down while Frances tried to give me something to cure me. I recognized my illness as being the usual stomach sickness, but, stubbornly, I did not offer any suggestions about what to do for it. The more ill I became the more I longed for home. As a result of this mental longing I became even more ill. Before a great deal of time elapsed I began to voice my desire to return to my grandmother's for by then I felt that that was the only cure. As my frequent cries of, "I want to go home," began to produce a worried look on Frances' countenance, I perceived that by means of my illness I might gain my return home in spite of the fact that my mother's arguments had previously failed in that respect.

When my father arrived home that night, he found me lying on the bed in what appeared to be complete agony. He and Frances discussed the matter.

"John, she has been ill since five o'clock this afternoon; now it is eleven and she just keeps getting worse," Frances said worriedly.

"But she was perfectly healthy this morning!" my father replied.

Frances cast another glance at me, at which look I emitted a low moan and murmured, "I want to go home." Then she turned and said firmly to my father, "I think you had better call her mother and ask her what to do."

"I guess so," my father said resignedly.

From the bedroom I could dimly hear my father talking on the phone. I heard him approach the door of the bedroom and begin to discuss the situation with Frances.

"Evelyn said that Patsy becomes sick at her stomach easily, but that it never lasted for this long a time before. She sounded worried."

"She's so pale and just keeps crying to go home," Frances added.

They talked the matter over a little while longer, and I heard them decide to wait and see how I felt in the morning. This sounded to me as if there were a chance that I might not remain where I was if I continued to be sick. Would I get over my sudden illness, or would I be able to go home? I wished fervently for the latter. Would my stomach co-operate?

That night my sleep was punctuated by tears and a frequent expression of my wish to return home. The next morning I felt slightly better. Did this mean that I was going to be well and forced to extend my vacation? It was not long, however, before the maid arrived. The sight of her brought a new pang of homesickness. I didn't want to spend any more days with her. I wanted to play with someone my own age. I remembered the day that she came to take me to my father's home, and the fun I had been having in the hours preceding her arrival. Fresh tears rose to my eyes and my heart jumped into its erratic pounding that sounded terrifying. When my father and Frances saw that I had become worse again, they looked anxiously at each other.

My father cleared his throat. "Frances, I'm not sure what to do. Patsy is so ill that all she wants to do is return home. It will be a case of losing a point if I allow her to go, but I don't like to take the responsibility for her becoming worse. I am afraid that her illness is partly due to homesickness."

Frances gravely assented and said, "She hasn't been very happy here. I think that her home life has been upset enough for any child without forcing an added disturbance to it. . . . Don't you think she should go home?"

My father was silent for a moment and then said, "Well, perhaps she should go home for a while, and then we can see how she feels about returning."

Home? To Maplewood Avenue, which in my imagination had become almost an enchanted place by now? The beating of my heart lessened. I knew that I wouldn't remain ill very long, but just long enough to return to my grandmother's house. I was to leave that very afternoon! Why, almost the entire summer lay before me, filled with Norma, dolls, the grape arbor and "Buck Rogers." Hot afternoons to be spent on the screened-in porch and icecream bars purchased from the vendor who came in his white truck with the bells—these things popped rapidly into my mind. No thought of returning to my father's home entered my mind.

My "vacation" had been a test to my father; in his mind it had failed. It had also seemed a test to my mother; for her it would be a success. For me the test was still going on; it would end when I was safely inside my grand-

mother's house and my father's car pulled away from the curb. Then it would be all right for my heart to resume its normal beating, and my stomach to resume its good health. I somehow sensed that nature would co-operate with me that far—and it did.

Enter Mister Eliot

CHARLES W. ECKERT

Rhetoric 101, Theme 13

I HAVE JUST FINISHED READING *COLLECTED POEMS* BY T. S. Eliot. As I closed the book, simultaneously putting away my Merriam-Webster dictionary and eighteen volumes of *The Encyclopedia Britannica* which were used for deciphering purposes, I noticed my harried reflection in the mirror. Looking at it compassionately, I quoted these lines from Eliot to myself:

And should I then presume?

And how should I begin?

I knew that I had to write a book report, but what was I reporting on? It was certainly poetry, although I felt that most of its verses had been inspired by a lexicon and not a muse. It was also an analysis of the modern mind and a fine study of indefinite frustration, but why, precisely, was it written in such a manner? Eliot appreciates the power of simplicity, as is proved by a few of his passages, but the Gordian knot of scholarly references and subtle intellectualisms that weaves the parts into a whole is not intended for average consumption. Mr. Eliot intends this only for the entertainment of other Mr. Eliots. Reading his most praised poem, "The Waste Land," must afford his adherents a sense of achievement similar to that derived from solving a big, Sunday crossword puzzle. For example, what significance would you attach to this quotation from one of his minor poems?

So we took young Cyril to church. And they rang a bell
And he said right out loud, crumpets.

Don't throw away that sausage.

It's come in handy. He's artful. Please will you
Give us a light?

Light

Light

Et les soldats faisaient la haie? ILS LA FAISAIENT.

Mr. F. O. Matthiessen, in "The Achievement of T. S. Eliot," says of this passage, "What flashes from the reiterated word 'light' is not merely the flicker of a match, but searching speculation as to the source from which the light for our age is to come." Sausages and searching speculation? Must this be the only idiom by which the drabness and disillusionment of contemporary life can be conveyed? Is it necessary to adorn verse with explanatory notes and speak in eight languages to convey the desired impression? It is quite true that this combining of fragments of trite conversation and quotations from the classical authors into one main theme is effective and mood-evoking, but really, Mr. Eliot, must it be in eight languages?

As to the merits of the poetry, its dramatic elements and visual images are as superb as they are unusual. Even the uninitiated can spontaneously appreciate Eliot's effective reproduction of a desired mood by the careful use of imagery and rhythm. Notice the feeling of despair and nocturnal loneliness in these lines:

Every street lamp that I pass
Beats like a fatalistic drum,
And through the spaces of the dark
Midnight shakes the memory
As a madman shakes a dead geranium.

With the exception of a few passages, almost all of Eliot's work contains the same vivid type of word-imagery. His experiments in verse and his brilliant essays on the nature of poetry as a product of "intellect and emotion" have been the deciding factors in awarding him the Nobel Prize. His influence in modern poetry is both extensive and strong, but even his most ardent imitators fall far short of his exacting standard. There are very few poets, perhaps, who could rival these lines:

POLYPHILOPROGENITIVE

The sapient sutlers of the Lord
Drift across the window-panes
In the beginning was the Word.

In the beginning was the Word.
Superfotation of τὸ εἶναι,
And at the menstrual turn of time
Produced enervate Origen.

Perhaps I should say that there are very few poets who could even pronounce those lines.

Reading Eliot's works with a desire to understand them is like standing outside a rare and promising garden with no key to its forbidding gate. Inside,

a cluster of clichés may be seen growing on a vine of underlying meaning, but it is quite inaccessible to the keyless traveler. Is there a solution? Speaking for myself, I honestly don't know. I will either have to be content with appreciating Eliot's minor poems or start working and searching for the key to that forbidden garden. Of course, there is always a third alternative. I could forget the entire matter and go back to Bliss Carman. He had an interesting philosophy. Whereas Mr. Eliot denounces the foibles of his age but tactfully avoids any attempt to solve them, Bliss Carman ignored those problems completely. His motto was, "Off with the fetters! Back to Romanticism!" Hmmm, sounds wonderful. I think I'll put Mr. Eliot on the shelf for a while and take down that book of Carman's poetry. There is a lot to be said for the simple pleasures, too.

Canada, Canoes, and Mosquitoes

JIM SAMPSON

Rhetoric 101, Theme 12

HUMAN BEINGS ACT IN PECULIAR FASHIONS. SOME laugh and joke after narrowly escaping death; some endanger their lives by taking senseless chances; and some take canoe trips to the North Woods, are "eaten alive" by insects, travel for days without sleep, and come out of the wilderness laughing and bragging and swearing that they wouldn't have missed the trips for anything. Six explorer scouts who went to Canada two summers ago are typical examples of the last group. We were cocky and inexperienced. Neither Roy nor Dick knew anything about canoeing, and Roy could not even swim very well. Although the rest of us, Joe, Bob, Dip, and I, had had some experience as canoeists and campers, the country was new to us, and we had no clear idea of the conditions we might encounter. Despite our misgivings, however, we bubbled over with spirit and confidence and felt that no canoe trip could hold any uncertainty or terror for us, whether we paddled in Canada or at the North Pole. And so, on a sunny day in August, the six of us set out for Canada's vast canoe country. "What can we expect in regard to wildlife and insects?" we asked a grizzled old ranger at the Canadian custom's office before crossing the boundary line.

"Oh," he drawled, leaning back in his chair and thoughtfully rubbing his hand over the stubble on his chin, "Oh, you'll see a few deer, some skunks and beavers and other small game, and maybe some bear. Should catch some fish. Bugs won't bother you much. Few mosquitoes may come out at night. Few canoe flies may bother you some during the day. I wouldn't worry though,

boys. Just watch your fires and have a good time." We thanked him and left—left to experience six days of canoeing, camping, good fellowship, and the nightly visits of swarms of blood-thirsty mosquitoes. The first day on the trail showed us Canada at its best. Everything was just as it appeared in travel folders—a sunny, blue sky; deep, cool, blue lakes; and vast forests of giant pines, spruces, and balsam extending for miles all around us. That night, after a refreshing meal, we slept under the bright stars, totally unaware of the misery the next two nights would bring.

No one in that small group will ever forget those two days and nights that followed. Needless to say, the few mosquitoes that "might come out at night," as the ranger had put it, actually swarmed over us in great buzzing hordes. Whether the ranger was simply ignorant of the true situation, or whether his conception of a few bothersome mosquitoes was quite different from ours, I don't know. I do know that never have I spent two more miserable nights. The little devils caught us almost wholly unprepared. Our only defenses were a few individual shreds of mosquito netting, one mysterious, cumbersome bundle of netting given to us by our canoe outfitter, and several small bottles of mosquito repellent.

The sun was just setting at the end of the second day when we first met our tormentors. After a hard day's paddling, we had chosen what we thought was an ideal camp site and were looking forward to a restful evening, a good meal, and a cheerful gathering around the campfire followed by a sound night's sleep. I was the first to notice the mosquitoes, and after two or three slaps, I said, "Cripes, I hope these bugs don't get any worse."

"What few there are will leave when it's dark," was the reply. I accepted this word of authority and went about my work of helping to cook supper, but I was becoming more concerned about our unwelcome guests and more uncomfortable all the time. Then at dusk they hit us. Dense swarms suddenly buzzed around our heads and sent us scrambling for the mosquito repellent and heavy clothes through which the long stingers could not penetrate. We soon discovered that the repellent was useless, for the mosquitoes, apparently not having tasted human blood all summer, paid no heed to our "sure fire" potions and proceeded to feast on us in a fierce manner. When darkness settled, their numbers increased, and the "word of authority" was soundly cursed. As a matter of fact, cursing became the prevalent form of speech from that time on throughout the night. Try as we might, we could not escape our tormentors in the open. We went so far as to choke down our food while standing in the smoke of the fire, but the acrid fumes affected us more than they affected the mosquitoes. Immediately after supper we threw our unwashed mess kits into the bushes and stumbled into our tents to prepare for bed, cursing the mosquitoes, the old ranger, Canada, and the world in general. It did not take long to decide on a defense against the mosquitoes, since there seemed to be only two choices. One was to crawl into a sleeping bag and drape

a small piece of netting over one's face; the other was to cover the opening of the tent with all the netting available. Joe, Roy, and I chose the former method, and Dick, Bob, and Dip chose the latter. Things might have gone well but for two conditions. The night was too warm to permit sleeping in a heavy bag, and there was not quite enough netting to cover the opening of a tent. Therefore, Joy, Roy, and I "roasted" in our sleeping bags most of the night, while our companions sat up until three o'clock playing bridge and battling the mosquitoes that continuously entered their tent.

That was some night! We all must have drifted off to sleep near morning from nervous exhaustion, because the sun was high in the sky when six scratching, yawning, grumbling campers crawled from their tents. We were indeed sorry sights to behold. After a hot breakfast, however, our outlook on life brightened somewhat, and we began making preparations for breaking camp. Naturally, the conversation centered on the night's experience. "I don't care where we go," said Dick, "just so long as I don't see any more of those damned mosquitoes."

"That's for sure," said Bob, surveying an arm bearing numerous red welts. "One more night like that, and I'll go nuts."

Another "word of authority" summed up the situation by saying, "Well, we probably wouldn't have been bothered if the weather hadn't been so warm. Might as well move on, though, and find a better camp site." We all agreed.

As the day unfolded, our thoughts and fears of mosquitoes were momentarily forgotten under the influence of warm sunshine and the excitement of fishing. Shortly after leaving camp, several of us set up our rods and reels and began casting into a narrow channel between two islands. Luck did not favor us, and we were just starting to move on when—wham! My rod bent nearly double, and I felt the shocking power of my first Canadian fish on the hook. For a moment I only sat there watching the rod being whipped back and forth by the movements of the fish. Then, with a wild whoop, I proceeded to crank the reel and to jerk the rod about in a most un-fisherman-like manner. It was a great battle for me. The fish, however, didn't seem to have too much trouble at his end of the line, and my unskilled efforts to literally drag him to the canoe were suddenly ended when he dived swiftly and snapped the line. We didn't even see the fish, but the sight of my rod whipping about like a stalk of wheat in a windstorm had a stimulating effect on all of us. Plans were quickly changed in favor of fishing, and in no time at all we found ourselves comparing recipes for cooking our finny friends—who were still in the lake. We fished the rest of the morning and all afternoon. We tried every trick we knew and used every lure we had, but our efforts were rewarded with only one fish, a wall-eyed pike of fair size. I was proud to be the captor. We didn't know it at the time, but that was the only fish we were to catch on the entire trip. Considering the price of our fishing licenses (and the loss of one good lure) that fish cost us \$17.10.

The fishing during the day was a disappointment, but this was mild compared with our trials that night. We chose a camp site on top of a high, rocky cliff. Dropping steeply into a lake, the cliff was obviously dangerous and a poor place on which to find a soft bed, but with its lofty, wind-swept position, we reasoned, it offered a splendid refuge from mosquitoes. We were wrong. Once again at dusk the little devils came swarming from everywhere, and again our supper, the evening plans, and our night's sleep were ruined. I am still surprised that we passed the night on the cliff without any casualties. The mosquitoes were nearly driving us crazy while we feverishly prepared our beds on the hard rocks. Axes were swung with wild abandon in the darkness, cutting boughs from trees to soften the beds. Curses and yells echoed back and forth over the dark water below as we dashed about on the edge of the cliff, illuminated only by flashlights. After fifteen minutes of mad activity among the voracious mosquitoes, we lay panting in our sleeping bags with the small pieces of netting covering our faces. The most comfortable spot Roy and I could find was located two feet from the edge of a drop-off, the lake being fifty feet directly below. The others were scattered about the cliff in similarly hazardous positions. A repetition of the preceding night ensued. By three o'clock in the morning Roy and I had reached a point where we couldn't stand the torture any longer, and we decided to do one of two things—either jump off the cliff and end it all or go fishing out on the lake. Our instinct of self-preservation, weakened though it was, caused us to choose the latter, and we hurriedly dressed, grabbed our tackle, and raced for a canoe. You can imagine our dejection when, after three hours of paddling and fruitless casting, it began to rain. There was nothing to do but paddle back to camp in the downpour. "At least we'll get back in time for a hot breakfast," said Roy encouragingly from the bow of the canoe.

"I can taste that hot cocoa now," I replied. But, alas, we were deceived, for when we reached the cliff, we found our companions buried under tents, ground cloths, and pine boughs, sound asleep. Also, there was not a stick of dry firewood to be found, and to add to our plight, an uncovered can of powdered milk had filled with water and spilled over in a pasty mess onto our food supplies. Roy and I surveyed the dismal scene, looked at each other, and burst into riotous laughter. Soaking wet, tired, and hungry, we were beyond despair. Canada had shown us its worst.

Despite a bad beginning, the new day marked a pleasant change in our fortunes, and good luck followed us the rest of the trip. Sleeping conditions became excellent as the result of an ironic discovery. Out of curiosity, three of the fellows untangled the outfitter's shapeless bundle of mosquito netting, which we had thus far forgotten even to examine. They were astonished to see it take the form of a mosquito-proof tent large enough to accommodate six campers easily. Although we laughed heartily at our failure to discover the tent sooner, I believe everyone must have kicked himself mentally for not

being more observant. The discovery of the tent was the turning point of the trip. Sleep that had been vainly sought for two nights was now possible under the perfect protection of the netting, and our spirits and enthusiasm soared. The water suddenly became more wonderful for swimming; canoeing became greater fun than ever before; and even everyday tasks such as chopping wood and washing dishes were accomplished with zest. The quality of the meals reached a new high, and when the last evening meal on the trail was highlighted by two delicious fresh blueberry pies, our joy was complete.

When we came off the trail on the sixth day, we were tougher, more confident, and much wiser campers. We had entered the Canadian wilderness eager to learn what the North Woods had to offer, and we had been taught many lessons.

"Well, boys, how did it go?" asked the grizzled old ranger at the custom's office as we prepared to enter the United States. All thoughts of poor fishing, sleepless nights, and mosquitoes were strangely forgotten.

"The trip was swell," we answered. "See you next year." And true to human nature, whenever the six of us talk of those two hellish nights with the mosquitoes up in the Canadian wilds, there isn't a one of us who doesn't laugh and brag and swear that he wouldn't have missed the trip for anything.

How to Wash a Dog

CLIFFORD WEIDNER

Rhetoric 101, Theme 9

ONE IS CONSTANTLY SEEING PICTURES OF BEAUTIFUL show dogs which are basking in their bubble baths with their blue blood supposedly coursing contentedly through their bodies. Possibly some dogs do appreciate baths. Usually, however, most dogs of the mongrel variety are strictly anhydrous. Yet even mongrels need washing now and then.

There is always the possibility that you can convince the family that the dog's name could be changed to Blackie. If that doesn't work, however, reality should be faced and the necessary preparations made.

The best location in which to wash a dog is away from any fragile or non-waterproof surroundings. The most likely place is in the back yard. Here, a stout stake can be driven into the ground and the dog chained to it. This latter idea is the result of careful thought done while chasing a soapy dog for more than three blocks.

The choice of a fine castile soap is very important. This should be used on yourself after having washed the dog with either Grandpa's Tar Soap or any

of the commercial flea soaps. It will not remove the lathered dog smell completely, but it will help.

After having found a suitable tub and a strong brush, you begin to "cherchez la dog." After a half-hour search, you brutally drag the cowering mutt from under the porch and introduce him to the water. Now is the time for speed. Holding his collar with one hand, you vigorously apply soap with the other. If you're fortunate, the dog will jump out of the tub only a few times, and you will have paused only about thirty times to put his front legs back where they belong. The trouble will increase in proportion to the size of the dog. The fact that many police dogs are grey may or may not be related to this.

The technique used in removing the pet from the water determines the real caliber of a dogwasher. This is a very precise maneuver and requires expert timing. One must either lift or shove the dog from the tub and at the same time prepare to move rapidly in the opposite direction. The dog's dislike of water coupled with a cleverly hinged backbone produces a reflex action that makes the dog a veritable lawn sprinkler. It is this charming feature that has so popularized bathing dogs out-of-doors. The average range of this shower is about fifteen feet. However, underestimation of a canine's ability in this circumstance can be disastrous.

After several false starts, accompanied by speedy retreats when the dog decided to shake himself just once more, you get close enough to grab him and finish the job with a towel. The dog is clean! He's even white! How could anything have become so dirty? you ask yourself. Then you take a look at yourself. You're wet. There is something very sticky in your shirt pocket—flea soap.

Next comes the cologne, and maybe you'll tie a white ribbon around his neck to symbolize purity. The job is finished. You sigh happily, release the dog, and go into the house to soak under the shower.

Dinner is generally the time when you hope to hear praise for your efforts. The first slur on your work comes when someone asks why the dog wasn't washed this afternoon. You control yourself and show them your ravaged hands. Then you look for the dog. You'll find him on the back porch, nicely blending with the grey floor paint. You make a grab for him, but he's too fast.

"Here Blackie, nice Blackie," you call. The S. P. C. A. has just lost another supporter.

Nature's Revolt

The thick concrete wall, which men had constructed to keep the normally pacific Biscayne Bay within its boundaries, groaned as the mighty whitecapped waves, churned by an angry wind, slapped, slid back, and slapped again and again. The tremendous force of the onrushing surf met the levee and sent tons of white spray over the wall and down upon the shivering houses and frantic trees beyond.—STANLEY HARWELL.

Rhet as Writ

I wondered at the time what makes people think that night falls. To me it looked like it had oozed out of the hollows.

* * * *

Night falls quickly in March; dropping like a burlap sack.

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The hundreds of windows glittered in the warm August sunlight, and to stand between the sixteenth century lions, which flanked the main entrance, and looked at this magnificent structure was indeed a sight to behold.

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It has often been estimated that the pyramids took two hundred years to build by noted archeologists.

* * * *

"Look at that old man with a beard about a block behind," Joe said.

* * * *

The dancing was superb and also very well done.

* * * *

The summer was in a dogma by August.



The Contributors

Kenneth F. Anderson—Amundsen

Melvin Churovich—Granite City Community High School

Earle W. Deneau—Joliet Township

Charles W. Eckert—Granite City Community High School

Stanley Elkin—South Shore, Chicago

P. J. Farrelly—Marion Township

Ivo Herzer—A. Scaachi, Bari, Italy

Robert Hundt—Kelvyn Park, Chicago

Jim Sampson—Champaign

John Shugart—West Rockford

Clifford Weidner—Edwardsville

Honorable Mention

Jo Dolley—Lonely Heart

Jack Galus—Kitty Takes Over

Martha Garling—Typical Club Member

Charles R. Goldman—Luck and Wheels

John E. Hoffman—How It Feels to Be a Criminal

Marilyn Homer—Flesh and Tissue

Ardeth Huntington—"Number, Please"

Donald Irvin—Cornhusking—the King of Sports

Chijoko Katano—Land Below the Wind

Lois Laughlin—Just Another Fight

Kenneth Mihill—Harbor of Peril

Louise Muenzer—Pumpkin Seed

Franklin J. Nienstadt—Appearances and Realities in History

Eleanor Sifferd—Miniature Victory

R. R. Tappero—Railroading

